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Line 24, after "has" insert --a--.

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After Line 7, insert the following new paragraph:

A7
--The invention being thus described, it will be obvious that the same may be varied in many ways. Such variations are not to be regarded as a departure from the spirit and scope of the invention, and all such modifications as would be obvious to one skilled in the art are intended to be included within the scope of the following claims.--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

A8 sub B1
1. (Amended) A method of operating a continuous casting and rolling plant[, in particular a thin-slab continuous casting and rolling plant,] with a computing unit, including a plurality of slabs [(29) which belong] belonging to different production orders [(30, 31) being produced] within sequences [(26, 27)] on the continuous casting and rolling plant, [characterized in that] comprising:

determining the order of the slabs [(29)] belonging to the production orders [(30, 31)] within the sequences [(26, 27) is determined] with the computing unit by a genetic algorithm[.]; and [in that]

controlling the continuous casting and rolling plant [is controlled] by the computing unit in accordance with the order determined.

AS
2. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, [characterized in that] wherein at least one of a selection [and/or], a recombination and[/or] a mutation is carried out by the genetic algorithm.

3. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 1 [or 2], [characterized in that] wherein the order of the slabs [(29)] belonging to the production orders [(30, 31)] within the sequences [(26, 27)] is determined with the computing unit by an event-oriented evaluation, and [in that] the continuous casting and rolling plant is controlled by the computing unit in accordance with the order determined.

4. (Amended) The method as claimed in claim 3, [characterized in that] wherein solutions are evaluated according to [their] quality by the event-oriented evaluation.

5. (Amended) The method as claimed [in one of claims] claim 1 [to 4], [characterized in that] wherein a starting solution, as a starting point, is determined by the computing unit.

6. (~~Twice~~ Amended) A continuous casting and rolling plant[, in particular a thin-slab continuous casting and rolling plant,] with a computing unit and means [of] for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 1 [or one of claims 2 to 5, in which case], wherein a plurality of slabs [(29)] which belong to different production orders [(30, 31)] can be] are produced within sequences [(26, 27)] on the continuous casting and rolling plant, [characterized in that] wherein the computing unit contains a genetic algorithm for determining the order of the slabs [(29)] belonging to the production orders [(30, 31)] within the sequences [(26, 27)].

AS
7. (Amended) The continuous casting and rolling plant as claimed in claim 6, [characterized by the use of] wherein an event-oriented evaluation is used for determining the order of the slabs [(29)] belonging to the production orders [(30, 31)] within the sequences [(26, 27)].

Please add the following new claims:

AG
-- 8. The method of claim 1, wherein the continuous casting and rolling plant is a thin-slab continuous casting and rolling plant.

9. The method as claimed in claim 2,
wherein the order of the slabs belonging to the production orders within the sequences is determined with the computing unit by an event-oriented evaluation, and the continuous casting and rolling plant is controlled by the computing unit in accordance with the order determined.

10. The method as claimed in claim 9, wherein solutions are evaluated according to quality by the event-oriented evaluation.

11. The method as claimed claim 2, wherein a starting solution, as a starting point, is determined by the computing unit.

12. The method as claimed claim 3, wherein a starting solution, as a starting point, is determined by the computing unit.

13. The method as claimed claim 4, wherein a starting solution, as a starting point, is determined by the computing unit.

14. The method as claimed claim 9, wherein a starting solution, as a starting point, is determined by the computing unit.

15. The method as claimed claim 10, wherein a starting solution, as a starting point, is determined by the computing unit.

16. A continuous casting and rolling plant with a computing unit and means for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 2, wherein a plurality of slabs which belong to different production orders are produced within sequences on the continuous casting and rolling plant, wherein the computing unit contains a genetic algorithm for determining the order of the slabs belonging to the production orders within the sequences.

17. A continuous casting and rolling plant with a computing unit and means for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 3, wherein a plurality of slabs which belong to different production orders are produced within sequences on the continuous casting and rolling plant, wherein the computing unit contains a genetic algorithm for determining the order of the slabs belonging to the production orders within the sequences.

18. A continuous casting and rolling plant with a computing unit and means for carrying out the method as claimed in claim 4, wherein a plurality of slabs which belong to different production orders are produced within sequences on the continuous casting and rolling plant, wherein the computing unit contains a genetic algorithm for determining the order of the slabs belonging to the production orders within the sequences.